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(54) Title: CYLINDRICAL ALKALINE BATTERY

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[There are no amendments to this patent.]

Claim

Cylindrical alkaline battery with the open end of electric current generation element-containing positive electrode can (4) being sealed with a seal (6) consisting of a thick circular part (61) with a through-hole (64) for the insertion of a negative electrode collector rod (5), an outer edge (62) in contact with the open end of the positive electrode can (4), and a connecting part (63) for connecting the thick circular part (61) and the outer edge (62), with a circular support (7) placed over the thick circular part (61) and the thick circular part (61) fastened between the negative electrode collector rod (5) and the circular support (7) after insertion of the negative electrode collector rod (5) in the through-hole (64), followed by fastening of the outer edge (62) of the seal (6) to the inner edge of the opening of the positive electrode can (4) or inward folding of the edge of the metal outer can (13) for pressing to prevent its movement to the outside of the battery and installing a spring (9) between the negative electrode collector rod (5) and negative electrode terminal plate (8) to press the head of the negative electrode collector rod (5) in the axial direction, characterized in that the through-hole surrounding part (6a) and other part (6b) of the thick circular part (61) of the seal (6) are molded separately; with the contact part (6c) between the outer face of the through-hole surrounding part (6a) and the inner face of the other part (6b) being tapered with a gradual decrease in the diameter toward the electric current generation element side; with the inner face (6d) of the other part (6b) being tapered with a gradual decrease in the diameter toward the electric current generation element against the outer contact face (6c) of the through-hole surrounding part (6a); and with the through-hole surrounding part (6a) being inserted into the other part (6b) to form the seal (6).

Detailed explanation of the invention

The present invention concerns an improvement of a cylindrical alkaline battery using metal oxides such as manganese dioxide, silver oxide, mercury oxide, nickel oxide, etc., for the positive electrode active materials, with it being an objective of the present invention to provide a high-safety cylindrical alkaline battery allowing a rapid escape of gases to the outside as the battery's internal pressure rises abnormally, along with the prevention of battery breakage by such an abnormal rise of internal pressure.

With strong alkalis used for electrolytes in alkaline batteries, excessive discharge and impurities in the negative electrode active materials may cause a rapid generation of gases in large amounts, resulting in an abnormally high pressure inside the batteries.

In one safety scheme shown in Figure 7, a synthetic resin seal used for sealing the open part of a positive electrode can is made somewhat thin, thus when the pressure inside the battery is abnormally high, the thin part (63b) may break, allowing the gases to escape and preventing electrolyte scattering, with battery rupture.

However, it is very difficult to form a small seal with a thin part that will break under a certain pressure, and with thickness variation, there is a danger of breakage under a designated pressure or breakage under a pressure below the desired pressure.

The present invention is to overcome such problems and to provide a high-safety-level cylindrical alkaline battery with the open end of the electric current generation element-containing positive electrode can being sealed with a seal consisting of a thick circular part with a through-hole for the insertion of a negative electrode collector rod, an outer edge in contact with the open end of the positive electrode can, and a connecting part for connecting the thick circular part and the outer edge, with a circular support placed over the thick circular part and the thick circular part fastened between the negative electrode collector rod and the circular support after insertion of the negative electrode collector rod in the through-hole, followed by fastening of the outer edge of the seal to the inner edge of the opening of the positive electrode can or inward folding of the edge of the metal outer can for pressing to prevent its movement to the outside of the battery, and installing a spring between the negative electrode collector rod and negative electrode terminal plate to press the head of the negative electrode collector rod in the axial direction, characterized in that the through-hole surrounding part and another part of the thick circular part of the seal are molded separately; the contact part between the outer face of the through-hole surrounding part and the inner face of the other part is tapered with a gradual decrease in the diameter toward the electric current generation element side; the inner face of the other part is tapered with a gradual decrease in the diameter toward the electric current generation element against the outer contact face of the through-hole surrounding part; and the through-hole surrounding part is inserted into the other part to form the seal. As a result, as the

battery's internal pressure reaches a designated pressure, the through-hole surrounding part and the other part of the seal separate, allowing a rapid escape of the gases from the battery, and preventing rupture of the battery.

Next, an example of the present invention is explained with figures.

Figure 1 shows a partial cross-sectional diagram illustrating an example of the cylindrical alkaline battery of the present invention; Figure 2 shows an expanded cross-sectional diagram of a key part of the battery illustrated in Figure 1.

First, a seal used in this example is explained. The seal (6) consists of a thick circular part (61) surrounding a through-hole (64) in the center for insertion of a negative electrode collector rod (5), a circular outer edge (62) to be in contact with the inner face of the opening edge of the positive electrode can (4), and a connecting part (63) between the thick circular part (61) having a V-shaped part (63a) and the outer edge (62), with an iron circular support (7) placed over the exterior side of the thick circular part (61), a brass negative electrode collector rod (5) inserted into the through-hole (64), and the thick circular part (61) compressed between the negative electrode collector rod (5) and the circular support (7).

The circular support (7) used in the present invention gradually rises from the middle part toward the center part, and its outer edge reaches to the outer edge (62) of the seal (6). For the thick circular part (61) of the seal (6), the through-hole surrounding part (6a) and the other part (6b), i.e., the part other than the through-hole surrounding part (6a) of the thick circular part (61), the part (6b) from the connecting part (63), and the outer edge (62) are formed separately, and the face (6c) at which the outer face of the through-hole surrounding part (6a) is in contact with the inner face of the other part (see Figure 3) tapers with a gradual diameter decrease toward the electric current generation element side, i.e., downward in the figure, so that the inner face (6d) of the other part (6b) tapers with a gradual decrease in the diameter toward the electric current generation element side against the outer edge contact face (6c) of the through-hole surrounding part (6a). As described above, the through-hole surrounding part (6a) and the other part (6b) are formed separately, with the through-hole surrounding part (6a) being inserted into the other part (6b) to form the seal (6).

Figure 1 illustrates a cylindrical alkaline battery using such a seal (6) described above, with a positive electrode (1) press-molded from granular positive electrode material obtained from 85 parts (by weight, same hereafter) of manganese dioxide, 12 parts of graphite flakes, and 3 parts of zinc-oxide-dissolved 30-wt% potassium hydroxide aqueous solution, a gel-form negative electrode (2) obtained by mixing 60 parts of zinc amalgam powder, 1 part of sodium carboxymethylcellulose, and 39 parts of electrolyte of 5.2-wt% zinc-oxide-dissolved 35-wt% potassium hydroxide aqueous solution, vinylon-rayon paper separator (3) for separation of the positive electrode (1) and negative electrode (2) with the separator (3) and positive electrode (1)

impregnated with the electrolyte, nickel-plated iron positive electrode can (4), a groove (4a) formed near the opening end of the positive electrode can (4) for receiving the seal (6) inserted into the open part of the positive electrode can (4), with one edge of the seal (6) loaded with the circular support (7) and the negative electrode collector rod (5) inserted in contact with the lower wall of the groove (4a), and the opening end part of the positive electrode can (6) [sic] bent gently inward pressing against the outer edge (62) of the seal (6) to seal the opening part of the positive electrode can (6) [sic]. The figure also shows nickel-plated iron negative electrode terminal plate (8), with this negative electrode terminal plate (8) having a gas vent hole (8a). The figure also shows a nickel-plated carbon steel plate spring (9) placed between the negative electrode collector rod (5) and the negative electrode terminal plate (8), in such a way that the plate spring (9) presses, at its center, the head of the negative electrode collector rod (5) in the axial direction, with its edge being in contact with the edge of the negative electrode terminal plate (8). The figure also shows a paper ring (10) insulating the positive electrode can (4) and negative electrode terminal plate (8), a resin tube (11), a nickel-plated iron positive electrode terminal plate (12), tin-plated steel outer can (13), and resin rings (14, 15). A liquid packing material made from an asphalt compound (a mixture of blown asphalt and process oil) is present between the seal (6) and the negative electrode collector rod (5), between the seal (6) and the positive electrode can (4), and between the through-hole surrounding part (6a) of the seal (6) and the other part (6b).

When the internal pressure of this battery rises abnormally high by abnormal gas generation, etc., as shown in Figure 3, the through-hole surrounding part (6a) of the seal (6) rises together with the negative electrode collector rod (5), leaving a gap between the through-hole surrounding part (6a) and the other part (6b), for rapid escape of the gases generated in the positive electrode can (4) through the gap. The gases escaped from the positive electrode can (4) are lead to the outside through the gas vent hole (8a) of the negative electrode terminal plate (8).

After escape of the gases from the battery, the through-hole surrounding part (6a) of the seal (6) and the negative electrode collector rod (5) are pressed back by the restoration force of the plate spring (9) to return to the original state as shown in Figures 1-2.

In the meantime, the upward movement of the other part (6b) of the seal (6) is prevented by the bent opening edge of the positive electrode can (4). The edges of the plate spring (9) are fixed by the folded part of the metal external can (13) via the edge of the negative electrode terminal plate (8), the resin tube (11), and the resin ring (14), thus with a rise in internal pressure, only its middle part is raised along with the negative electrode collector rod (5) and the through-hole surrounding part (6a) of the seal (6), then as the internal pressure decreases with gas escape, the recovery force returns the negative electrode collector rod (5) and the through-hole surrounding part (6a) of the seal (6) to their original positions.

The battery of the present invention does not have a thin part (63b) in the seal (6) as in conventional battery seals, thus they can be fabricated easily and the variation of pressure for removing gases from the battery is small as shown in Table 1. It is also advantageous that as the internal pressure decreases with the escape of gases as described above, the restoration force of the plate spring (9) returns the through-hole surrounding part (6a) of the seal (6) and negative electrode collector rod (5) to their original positions, thus continuous use is possible.

In the present invention, the pressure needed to raise the through-hole surrounding part (6a) of the seal (6) for allowing gases to escape to outside is usually 20-35 kg/cm². Such a pressure is greatly affected by the seal (6) material (hardness), compressibility of the thick circular part (61) of the seal (6), the taper angle of the outer face of the through-hole surrounding part of the seal (6), hardness of the plate spring (9), etc. Usually, the compressibility is 10-25% and the taper angle is 5-10°. The plate spring (9) usually has a Vickers hardness of 200-500. The compressibility of the thick circular part (61) can be obtained by the equation given below:

$$\frac{T-t}{T} \times 100$$

T: original thickness in the radial direction

t: thickness in the radial direction after loading the circular support and insertion of the negative electrode collector rod.

In the present invention, the seal (6) may be made from synthetic resins such as polyethylene, polypropylene, nylon, etc. The through-hole surrounding part (6a) and the other part (6b) may be made of the same material. The through-hole surrounding part (6a) may be molded from nylons such as nylon 6, nylon 66, nylon 610, nylon 11, nylon 12, etc. The other part (6b) may be molded from polyethylene, polypropylene, etc. They can be molded in the usual manner, such as injection molding, compression molding, etc.

For example, this battery can be made by the following process.

The through-hole surrounding part (6a) and the other part (6b) were formed separately by injection molding, using nylon 11 for the through-hole surrounding part (6a) and nylon 66 for the other part (6b). The inner diameter of the through-hole surrounding part (6a), i.e., diameter of the through-hole (64), was 2.0 mm with a height of 4.0 mm, upper end outer diameter of 4.0 mm, and lower end outer diameter of 3.0 mm with a taper angle of 7°; the other part's (6b) outer diameter, i.e., outer diameter of the outer edge (62) was 80.7 mm, with a plate spring thickness of 0.15 mm and Vickers hardness of 300. The outer face of the through-hole surrounding part (6a) was coated with an asphalt compound, and the through-hole surrounding part (6a) was inserted into the other part (6b).

The circular support (7) was loaded at the outer side of the thick circular part (61) of the seal (6) prepared above. The negative electrode collector rod (5) coated with an asphalt

compound on its upper axial part was inserted into the through hole (64), and the thick circular part (61) was fastened between the negative electrode collector rod (5) and the circular support (7). The thick circular part (61) in contact with the circular support (7) had an outer diameter of 5.0 mm, with the circular support (7) having an outer diameter of 5.1 mm and radial direction thickness of 1.25 mm. The negative electrode collector rod (5) had an axial outer diameter of 2.6 mm, and the thick circular part (61) had a compressibility of 16.7%.

Separately, the positive electrode (1) was filled into the positive electrode can (4), and groove (4a) was formed near the opening end of the positive electrode can (4). The inner surface of the forward portion of the groove was coated with an asphalt compound, followed by filling with the separator (3), electrolyte and negative electrode (2), placing the seal (6) in the opening part of the positive electrode can (4), with inward bending of the opening part of the positive electrode can (4) to seal the open part of the positive electrode can (4) by pressing the inner face of the positive electrode can to the outer edge (62) of the seal (6).

Next, paper ring (10) was placed in the bent opening end of the positive electrode can (4), followed by placing the plate spring (9) and negative electrode terminal plate (8), placing the positive electrode terminal plate (12) onto the positive electrode side, covering with a heat-shrinkage vinyl chloride resin tube (11), and heating to shrink the resin tube (11), placing the resin rings (14, 15), then metal outer can (13). In this battery, the pressure designated for allowing the escape of gases was 80 kg/cm^2 .

Table 1 shows the relationship between the battery's internal pressure and the number of batteries that allowed the escape of gases, tested for battery A of the present invention with the constitution shown in Figure 1 and conventional battery B. In all cases, the batteries were the JIS C8511 LR20 type (diameter: 84.2 mm, height: 59.5 mm) of cylindrical alkaline manganese batteries, and 100 batteries were tested for each of batteries A and B. Each battery was subjected to forced gas generation by charging at 1000 mA, with the number of batteries that allowed gas escape when the internal pressure rose to a designated pressure being given. The conventional battery B had a constitution shown in Figure 6. The seal (6) made of nylon 11 had a thin part (63b) with a design thickness of 0.15 mm, with 30 kg/cm^2 for the pressure level designated for gas escape. The circular support (7) had a gas vent hole (7a).

Table 1

	Internal pressure of Battery (kg/cm^2)				
	20-25	25-30	30-35	35-40	40-45
Battery A	0	28	63	4	0
Battery B	3	25	41	28	3

(Note) In Table 1, the battery internal pressure of 20-25 indicates above 20 kg/cm² but below 25 kg/cm²; 25-30 indicates above 25 kg/cm² but below 30 kg/cm²; 30-35 indicates above 30 kg/cm² but below 35 kg/cm²; 35-40 indicates above 35 kg/cm² but below 40 kg/cm²; and 40-45 indicates above 40 kg/cm² but below 45 kg/cm².

As shown in Table 1, the conventional battery B showed substantial variation in pressures for gas escape, while such a variation was low in the case of the battery A of the present invention.

Liquid leakage resistance was investigated by keeping the battery A of the present invention and the conventional battery B at 60°C and a relative humidity of 90% for 40 days. Both batteries showed no liquid leakage, indicating comparable liquid-leakage resistance for both battery A of the present invention and conventional battery B. Namely, separate formation of the through-hole surrounding part (6a) and the other part (6b) of the seal (6) does not result in a lowering of the liquid-leakage resistance, and for this type of batteries, the battery A of the present invention has excellent liquid-leakage resistance. Yet, the compressibility of the thick circular part (61) of the battery B is 16.7%, which is the same as the battery A.

Figures 4-5 illustrate another example of a cylindrical alkaline battery of the present invention. The battery of Figure 4 is similar to that illustrated in Figure 1, except that in this battery, its circular support (7) is in a flat plate shape with its outer periphery not reaching to the outer edge (62) of the seal (6). In the battery shown in Figure 5, the upper end of the through-hole surrounding part (6a) of the seal (6) is in a claw shape; also, the outer face of the claw part does not touch the inner face of the other part (6b) and extends to the outer face of the other part (6b). Accordingly, the height of the other part (6b) is slightly lower, otherwise this battery has a constitution similar to that of the battery shown in Figure 1. The batteries shown in Figures 4 and 5 are similar in performance to the battery shown in Figure 1.

Figure 8 is a half cross-sectional diagram illustrating another example of cylindrical alkaline batteries of the present invention; Figure 9 is an expanded cross-sectional diagram of a key part of the battery shown in Figure 8.

Next, the seal (6) of this battery is explained. Similarly as in Figure 1, the seal (6) consists of a thick circular part (61) with a central through hole (64) for negative electrode collector rod (5) insertion, an outer edge (62) in contact with the opening edge of the positive electrode can (4), and a connecting part (63) for connecting the thick circular part (61) and the outer edge (62). An iron circular support (7) is loaded at the outer side of the thick circular part (61); a brass negative electrode collector rod (5) is inserted into the through hole (64); and the thick circular part (61) is compressed between the negative electrode collector rod (5) and the circular support (7). The through-hole surrounding part (6a) at the thick circular part (61) of the

seal (6) and the other part (6b), i.e., the part other than the through-hole surrounding part (6a) of the thick circular part (61), the part (6b) from the connecting part (63), and the outer edge (62) are formed separately, and the face (6c) at which the outer face of the through-hole surrounding part (6a) is in contact with the inner face of the other part tapers with a gradual diameter decrease toward the electric current generation element side, so that the inner face (6d) of the other part (6b) tapers with a gradual decrease in diameter toward the electric current generation element side against the outer edge contact face (6c) of the through-hole surrounding part (6a). As described above, the through-hole surrounding part (6a) and the other part (6b) are formed separately, and the through-hole surrounding part (6a) is inserted into the other part (6b) to form the seal (6).

Figure 8 illustrates a cylindrical alkaline battery using the seal (6) described above; its particular differences from the batteries described in other examples are in that sealing of the positive electrode can (4) is done by inward curling of the opening edge of the positive electrode can (4) to push this edge into the outer edge of the sagging part (63c) of the inverted triangular shape at the outer edge side of the seal (6), and the outer edge (62) of the seal (6) is pressed by bending the negative electrode side edge of the metal outer can (13). Despite such differences, similar to batteries described in other examples, as the battery's internal pressure reaches a designated level in batteries illustrated in Figures 8-9, the through-hole surrounding part (6a) and the other part (6b) of the seal (6) are separated, allowing rapid escape of the internal gases, thus preventing battery rupture, and as the internal pressure decreases with escape of the gas from the battery, they return to the original positions by the restoration force of the plate spring (9).

For example, the above battery can be made as shown below.

The through-hole surrounding part (6a) and the other part (6b) were formed separately by injection molding, using nylon 11 for the through-hole surrounding part (6a) and polyethylene for the other part (6b). The inner diameter of the through-hole surrounding part (6a), i.e., diameter of the through-hole (64), was 2.0 mm with a height of 4.0 mm, upper end outer diameter of 4.0 mm, and lower end outer diameter of 3.0 mm with a taper angle of 7°; the other part (6b) outer diameter, i.e., outer diameter of the outer edge (62) was 30.7 mm, with a plate spring thickness of 0.15 mm and Vickers hardness of 800. The outer face of the through-hole surrounding part (6a) was coated with an asphalt compound, and the through-hole surrounding part (6a) was inserted into the other part (6b).

The circular support (7) was loaded at the outer side of the thick circular part (6a) [sic] of the seal (6) prepared above. The negative electrode collector rod (5) coated with an asphalt compound on its upper axial part was inserted into the through hole (64), and the thick circular part (61) was fastened between the negative electrode collector rod (5) and the circular support (7). The thick circular part (61) in contact with the circular support (7) had an outer diameter of

5.0 mm, with the circular support (7) having an outer diameter of 5.1 mm and radial direction thickness of 1.25 mm. The negative electrode collector rod (5) had an axial outer diameter of 2.6 mm, and the thick circular part (61) had a compressibility of 16.7%.

Separately, the positive electrode (1) was filled into the positive electrode can (4), the opening edge of the positive electrode can (4) was curled inward, and its outer face was coated with an asphalt compound, followed by filling with the separator (3), electrolyte, and negative electrode (2), placing the seal (6) in the opening part of the positive electrode can (4), and pushing the opening edge of the positive electrode can (4) into the outer face of the sagging part (63c) of the inverted triangle shape at the outer edge (62) of the seal (6) to seal the opening of the positive electrode can (4).

Next, the plate spring (9) and negative electrode terminal plate (8) were placed above the outer edge (62) of the seal (6), followed by placing the positive electrode terminal plate (12) onto the positive electrode side, covering with a heat-shrinkage vinyl chloride resin tube (11), heating to shrink the resin tube (11), placing the resin rings (14, 15), then metal outer can (13), and fastening the resin ring (14), resin tube (11) edge, negative electrode terminal plate (8) edge, plate spring (9) edge, and the outer edge (62) of the seal (6) by the bent part of the negative electrode side edge of the metal outer can (13) for prevention of their movement to the battery's outer side. In this battery, the pressure designated for allowing escape of gases was 25 kg/cm^2 .

Table 2 shows the relationship between the battery's internal pressure and the number of batteries that allowed the escape of gases, tested with battery C of the present invention with the constitution shown in Figure 8 and conventional battery D. In all cases, the batteries were the LR20 type of cylindrical alkaline manganese battery, and 100 batteries were tested for each of batteries C and D under test conditions similar to those in Table 1. The conventional battery D had a constitution shown in Figure 10. The seal (6) made of polyethylene had a thin part (63b) with a design thickness of 0.20 mm, with 25 kg/cm^2 for the pressure level designated for gas escape.

Table 2

	Internal pressure of Battery				
	10-15	15-20	20-25	25-30	30-35
Battery C	0	5	72	28	0
Battery D	4	22	53	18	3

(Note) In Table 2, the battery internal pressure of 10-15 indicates above 10 kg/cm^2 but below 15 kg/cm^2 ; 15-20 indicates above 15 kg/cm^2 but below 20 kg/cm^2 ; 20-25 indicates above 20 kg/cm^2

but below 25 kg/cm²; 25-30 indicates above 25 kg/cm² but below 30 kg/cm²; and 30-35 indicates above 30 kg/cm² but below 35 kg/cm².

As shown in Table 2, the conventional battery D showed substantial variation in pressures for gas escape, while such a variation was low in the case of the battery C of the present invention.

Liquid-leakage resistance was investigated by keeping the battery C of the present invention and the conventional battery D under the conditions described above. Both batteries showed no liquid leakage. Namely, for these types of batteries, the battery C of the present invention has excellent liquid-leakage resistance. Yet, the compressibility of the thick circular part (61) of the battery D is 16.7%, which is the same as the battery C.

While plate springs were used in the above examples, springs are not limited to this type, and other types of springs such as coil springs can also be used. Even the plate springs are not limited to those used above, and other types of plate springs can also be used.

Brief explanation of the figures

Figure 1 is a half cross-sectional diagram illustrating an example of cylindrical alkaline batteries of the present invention. Figure 2 is an expanded cross-sectional diagram of a key part of the battery illustrated in Figure 1. Figure 3 is an expanded cross-sectional diagram of a key part of the battery illustrated in Figure 1, similar to Figure 2, explaining the escape of internal gases from the battery when the battery's internal pressure rose. Figures 4-5 are expanded cross-sectional diagrams of key parts of other examples of cylindrical alkaline batteries of the present invention. Figure 6 is a half cross-sectional diagram of a conventional battery. Figure 7 is an expanded cross-sectional diagram of a key part of the conventional battery shown in Figure 6. Figure 8 is a half cross-sectional diagram illustrating another example of cylindrical alkaline batteries of the present invention. Figure 9 is an expanded cross-sectional diagram of a key part of the battery shown in Figure 8. Figure 10 is an expanded cross-sectional diagram of a key part of the conventional battery shown in Figure 6.

- (4) positive electrode can
- (5) negative electrode collector rod
- (6) seal
- (6a) through-hole surrounding part
- (6b) other part
- (6c) face at which the outer side of the through-hole surrounding part makes contact with the inner face of the other part
- (6d) inner face of the other part

- (61) thick circular part
- (62) outer edge part
- (63) connecting part
- (64) through hole
- (7) circular support
- (8) negative electrode terminal plate
- (9) plate spring
- (13) metal outer can

Figure 1

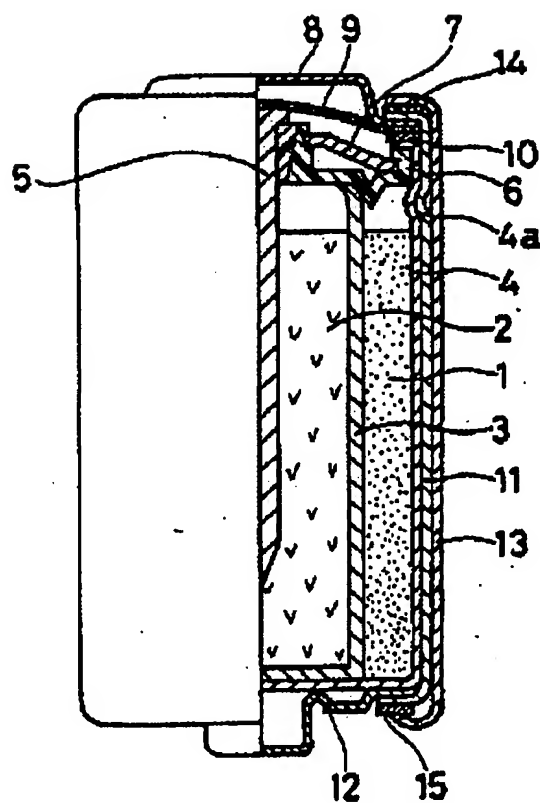


Figure 2

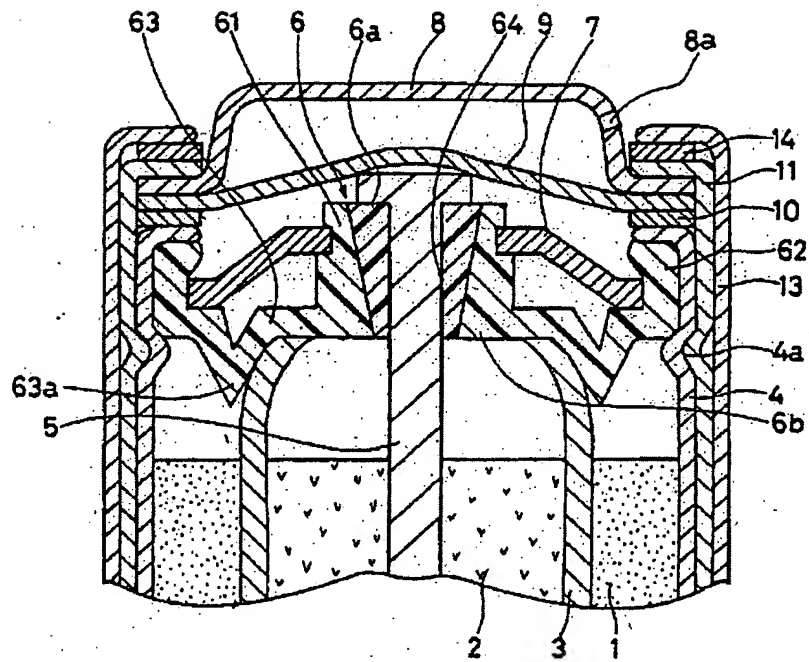


Figure 3

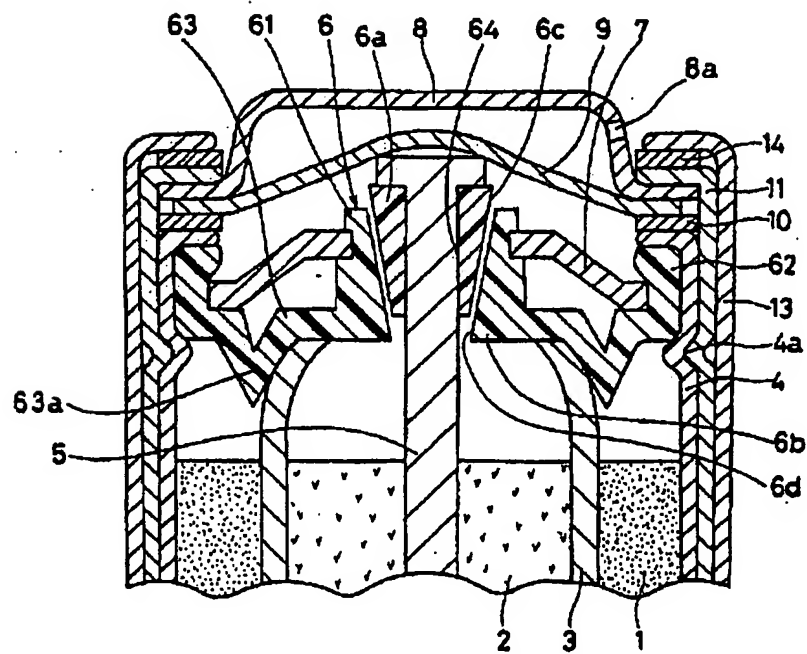


Figure 4

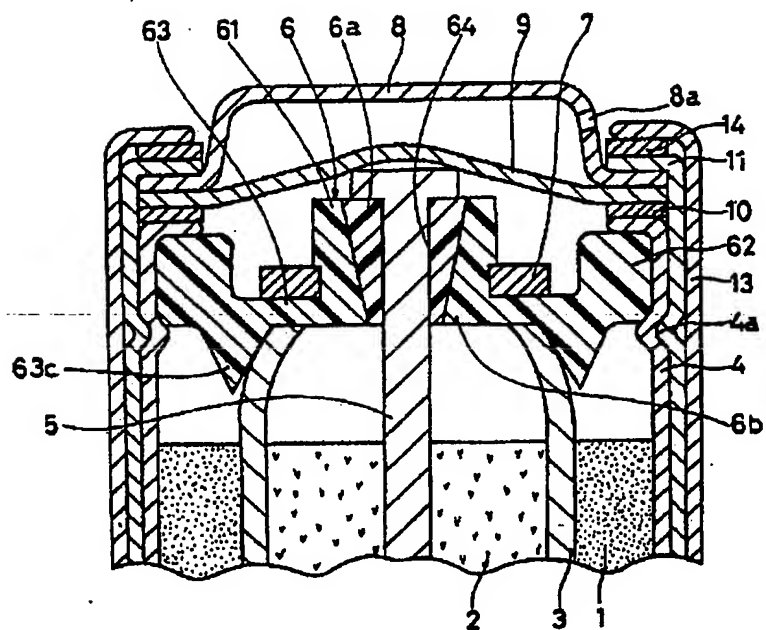


Figure 5

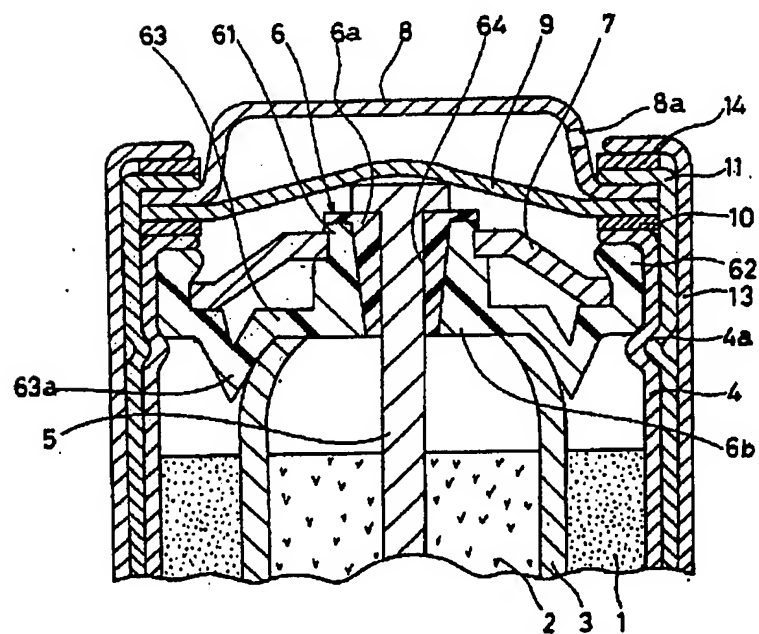


Figure 6

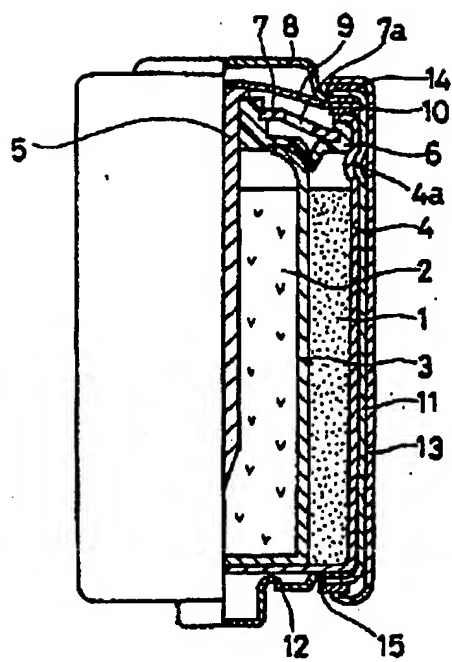


Figure 7

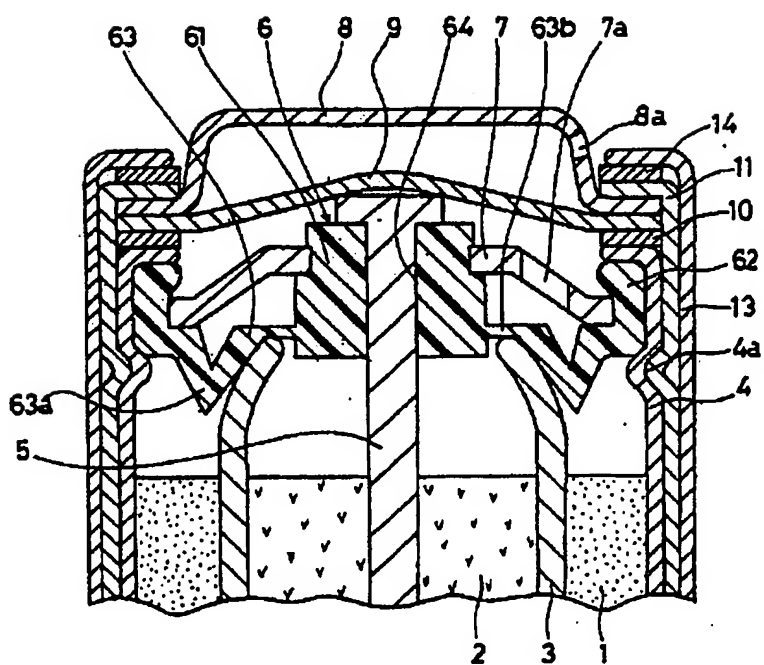


Figure 8

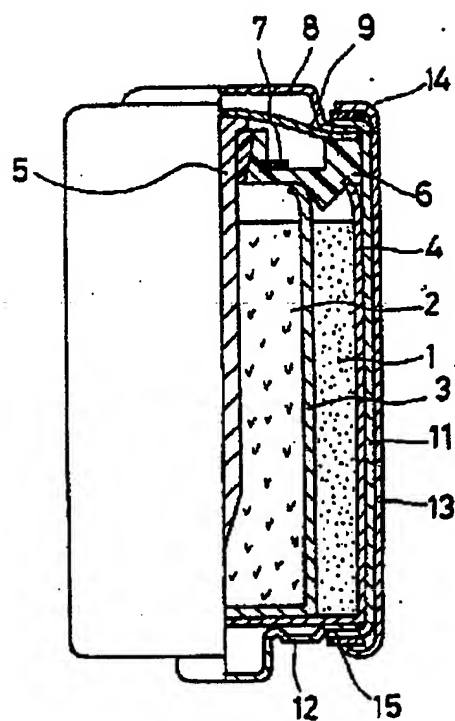


Figure 9

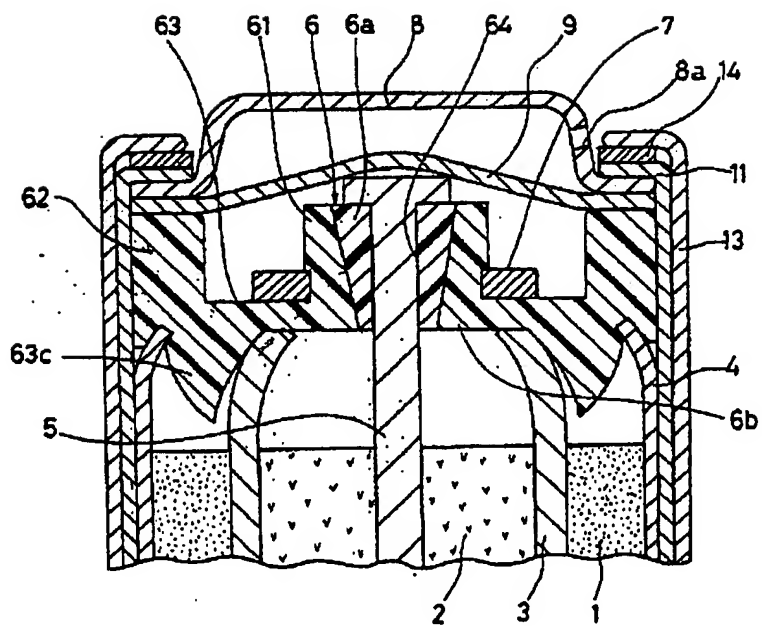
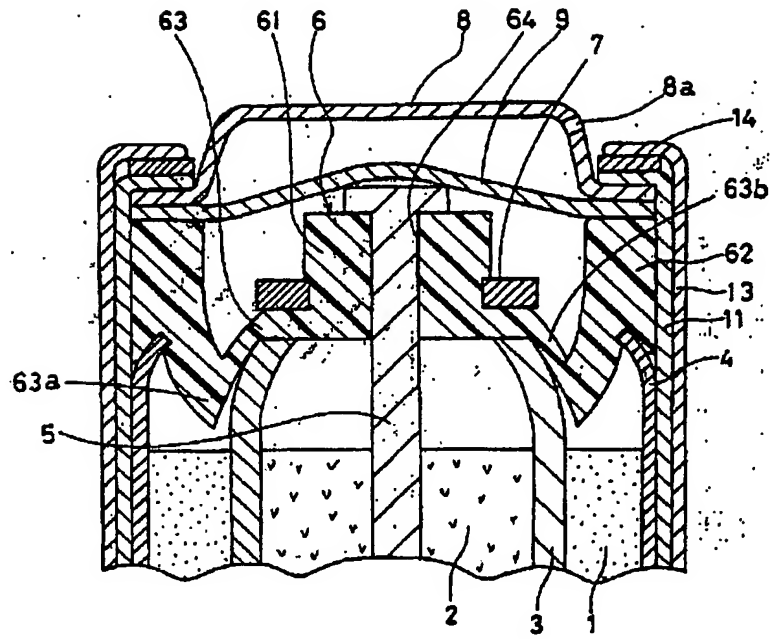


Figure 10





...the height of Excellence...

JP59-33751
CYLINDRICAL ALKALINE BATTERY

Translated from Japanese into English
by Phoenix Translations Code No. 22-4313

2110-A WHITE HORSE TRAIL, AUSTIN, TX 78757 Phone: (512) 343-8389
Toll-free: 877-452-1348, Fax: (512) 343-6721, Email: phoenixtranslations@ev1.net

Customer P.O. No: None Given

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⑭ 筒形アルカリ電池

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明 細 書

1 発明の名称

筒形アルカリ電池

2 特許請求の範囲

1. 発電要素を内填した正極缶(4)の開口部を、負極集電棒(5)を挿入する透孔(64)を中心とする厚肉環状部(61)と、正極缶(4)の開口端部と接する外周縁部(62)と、該厚肉環状部(61)と外周縁部(62)とを連結する連結部(68)とからなり、前記厚肉環状部(61)に環状支持体(7)を外嵌し、透孔(64)に負極集電棒(5)を挿入して前記厚肉環状部(61)を負極集電棒(5)と環状支持体(7)との間で締め付けた封口体(6)で封口し、封口体(6)の外周縁部(62)を正極缶(4)の開口端部の内方への締め付けまたは金属外装缶(3)の端部の内方への折り曲げにより押え電池外部側への移動を防止し、負極集電棒(5)と負極端子板(8)との間の空間部に配置したばね(9)により負極集電棒(5)の頭部を軸方向に押圧する筒形アルカリ電池において、封口体(6)の厚肉環状部(61)の透孔周辺部分(6a)

とその他の部分(6b)とを別々に成形し、透孔周辺部分(6a)の外周側でその他の部分(6b)の内周面と接する面(6c)は発電要素側に向つて漸次径が縮小するテーパ状に形成し、その他の部分(6b)の内周面(6d)は前記透孔周辺部分(6a)の外周側接面(6c)に対応して発電要素側に向つて漸次径が縮小するテーパ状に形成し、透孔周辺部分(6a)をその他の部分(6b)に挿入して封口体(6)を構成したことを特徴とする筒形アルカリ電池。

8 発明の詳細な説明

本発明は正極活物質として二酸化マンガン、酸化銀、酸化水銀、酸化ニッケルなどの金属酸化物を用いる筒形アルカリ電池の改良に係り、電池内部の圧力が異常上昇したときにガスを速やかに外部へ逃散させ、内圧の異常上昇による電池の破裂を防止する安全性の高い筒形アルカリ電池を提供することを目的とする。

アルカリ電池は電解液に強アルカリを使用する関係上、過放電や負極活物質中の不純物により多

漏のガスが急激に発生して電池内部の圧力が異常に高くなることがある。

そこで、正極缶の開口部を封口する合成樹脂製の封口体をたとえば第7図に示すように部分的に薄肉にし、電池内の圧力が異常に高まった際には、該薄肉部(68b)が破れてガスを外部に逃散させ、電池が破裂して電解液が飛び散るのを防止するなどの安全対策が講じられている。

しかしながら、小さな封口体を部分的に一定のガス圧で破れるような薄肉に成形することは非常にむづかしく、厚さにバラツキが生じて、設定圧力で破れないで危険を招いたり、あるいは設定圧力以下の圧力で破れて使用不能になるなどの問題がある。

本発明は、そのような問題を解消するためになされたものであり、負極集電棒を挿入する透孔を中心とする厚肉環状部と、正極缶の開口端部と接する外周縁部と、該厚肉環状部と外周縁部とを連結する連結部とからなり、該厚肉環状部に環状支持体を外嵌し、透孔に負極集電棒を挿入して前記

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つぎに本発明の実施例を図面に基づいて説明する。

第1図は本発明の筒形アルカリ電池の一実施例を示す半截断面図であり、第2図は第1図に示す電池の要部拡大断面図である。

まず、本実施例において用いる封口体について説明すると、封口体(6)は負極集電棒(5)を挿入する透孔(64)を中心としその周囲に形成された厚肉環状部(61)と、正極缶(4)の開口端部の内周面と接する環状の外周縁部(62)と、V字状部(68a)を有し該厚肉環状部(61)と外周縁部(62)とを連結する連結部(68)からなり、該厚肉環状部(61)の外側には鉄製の環状支持体(7)が嵌め込まれ、透孔(64)には真鍮製の負極集電棒(5)が挿入され、厚肉環状部(61)は負極集電棒(5)と環状支持体(7)との間で圧縮される。

なお、本実施例において用いる環状支持体(7)は中間部を内周側に向つて徐々に高くした中高状で、その外周側が封口体(6)の外周縁部(62)の内周部に達するものである。封口体(6)の厚肉環状部(61)に

(5)

厚肉環状部を負極集電棒と環状支持体との間で締め付けた封口体で正極缶の開口部を封口し、封口体の外周縁部を正極缶の開口端部の内方への締め付けまたは金属外装缶の端部の内方への折り曲げにより押え電池外部側への移動を防止し、負極集電棒と負極端子板との間の空間部に配置したばねにより負極集電棒の頭部を軸方向に押圧する筒形アルカリ電池において、封口体の厚肉環状部の透孔周辺部分とその他の部分とを別々に成形し、かつ透孔周辺部分の外周側でその他の部分の内周面と接する面は発電要素側に向つて漸次径が縮小するテーパ状に形成し、その他の部分の内周面は前記透孔周辺部分の外周側接面に対応して発電要素側に向つて漸次径が縮小するテーパ状に形成し、透孔周辺部分をその他の部分に挿入して封口体を構成することにより、電池内の圧力が設定圧力に達すると封口体の透孔周辺部分とその他の部分が離間して内部のガスを速やかに外部へ逃散させ、それによつて電池破裂を防止する安全性の高い筒形アルカリ電池を提供したものである。

(4)

おける透孔周辺部分(6a)と、その他の部分(6b)すなわち厚肉環状部(61)の透孔周辺部分(6a)以外の部分、連結部(68)および外周縁部(62)からなる部分(6b)とは別々に成形され、該透孔周辺部分(6a)の外周側でその他の部分の内周面に接する面(6c)(第8図参照)は発電要素側、すなわち図面における下側に向つて漸次径が縮小するテーパ状に形成され、その他の部分(6b)の内周面(6d)は前記透孔周辺部分(6a)の外周側接面(6c)に対応して発電要素側に向つて漸次径が縮小するテーパ状に形成されている。なお前記のように、これら透孔周辺部分(6a)とその他の部分(6b)とは別々に成形され、使用に際し、透孔周辺部分(6a)をその他の部分(6b)に挿入して封口体(6)が構成される。

第1図は上記のごとき封口体(6)を使用した筒形アルカリ電池を示すもので、(1)は二酸化マンガニ85部(重量部、以下同様)、りん状黒鉛12部および酸化亜鉛を溶解させた濃度80重量%の水酸化カリウム水溶液8部とを混合した顆粒状の正極合

(6)

劑の加圧成形体よりなる正極で、(2)は汞化亜鉛粉末60部、カルボキシメチルセルロースのナトリウム塩1部および酸化亜鉛を5.2重量%溶解させた85重量%水溶液^化カリウム水溶液よりなる電解液89部を混合してなるゲル状の負極であり、(3)は正極(1)と負極(2)とを隔離するビニロンレーヨン混抄紙からなるセパレータである。なおセパレータ(3)と正極(1)には電解液が含まれている。(4)は鉄製で表面にニッケルメッキが施された正極缶であり、(4a)は正極缶(4)の開口部に挿入された封口体(6)を受けるために正極缶(4)の開口端近傍に形成された溝であつて、この溝(4a)の底壁に、前記のように環状支持体(7)を嵌入し負極集電棒(5)を挿入した封口体(6)の一端が当接し、その状態で正極缶(6)の開口端部が内方へ締め付けられ彎曲してその内周面が封口体(6)の外周縁部(62)に圧接し正極缶(6)の開口部の封口がなされている。(8)は鉄製で外面にニッケルメッキが施された負極端子板であり、この負極端子板(8)にはガス抜き孔(8a)が設けられている。(9)は負極集電棒(5)と負極端子板(8)との

(7)

させうる。なお、そのようにして正極缶(4)の外部へ出たガスは負極端子板(8)のガス抜き孔(8a)を通過して電池外部へ出ていく。

そして、ガスが電池外部へ逃散したのちは、封口体(6)の透孔周辺部分(6a)は負極集電棒(5)と共に、板ばね(9)の復元力により押圧されて第1～2図に示すような元の状態に復帰する。

なお、上記の間、封口体(6)のその他の部分(6b)は、封口時の締め付けにより彎曲した正極缶(4)の開口端部によつて上方への移動が阻止されて動かない。また、板ばね(9)はその端部が負極端子板(8)の周縁部、樹脂チューブ(11)および樹脂リング(14)を介して金属外装缶(13)の折曲部で固定されているので、内圧が上昇したときにはその中央部のみが負極集電棒(5)や封口体(6)の透孔周辺部分(6a)と共に持ち上がるが、ガスが外部へ出て内圧が下がったときには、復元力が働いて、負極集電棒(5)および封口体(6)の透孔周辺部分(6a)を元の状態に復帰させる。

本発明の電池は、封口体(6)が従来電池の封口体

間の空間部に配置されたニッケルメッキを施した短形状の炭素鋼板よりなる板ばねであり、この板ばね(9)はその中央部で負極集電棒(5)の頭部を軸方向に押圧し、その端部で負極端子板(8)の周縁部に接触している。(10)は正極缶(4)と負極端子板(8)とを絶縁する紙リング、(11)は樹脂チューブ、(12)は鉄製で表面にニッケルメッキを施した正極端子板、(13)はスズメッキ鋼板よりなる金属外装缶、(14)は樹脂リングである。そして、封口体(6)と負極集電棒(5)との接面、封口体(6)と正極缶(4)との接面および封口体(6)の透孔周辺部分(6a)とその他の部分(6b)との接面には、アスファルトコンパウンド(ブロンアスファルトとプロセスオイルとの混合物)よりなる液状パッキング材が介在している。

この電池は、ガスの異常発生などにより電池内の内圧が異常に高くなつた場合、第8図に示すように、封口体(6)の透孔周辺部分(6a)が負極集電棒(5)と共に上昇して透孔周辺部分(6a)とその他の部分(6b)との間に隙間を生じ、正極缶(4)内に発生したガスをその隙間から速やかに外部へ逃散

(8)

のように薄肉部(68b)を設けるものではないのでその成形が容易であり、また後記第1表に示すように内部のガスを外部へ逃散させる圧力のバラツキが少ないという特徴を有する上に、上記のように内部のガスが逃散して内圧が下がったときには板ばね(9)の復元力により、封口体(6)の透孔周辺部分(6a)が負極集電棒(5)と共にもとの状態に復帰するので、そのまま継続使用できるという長所を有する。

本発明において、封口体(6)の透孔周辺部分(6a)を上昇させ、ガスを外部へ逃散させる圧力は通常20～85 kg/cm²に設定される。設定圧力に大きな影響を与えるものは封口体(6)の材質(硬度)、封口体(6)の厚肉環状部(61)の圧縮率、透孔周辺部分(6)の外周面のテーパ角度、板ばね(9)の硬度などであるが、圧縮率は通常10～25%、テーパは通常5～10°にされる。また板ばね(9)の硬度は通常ビッカース硬度で200～500にされる。なお、厚肉環状部(61)の圧縮率は次式により求められる。

(9)

$$\frac{T - t}{T} \times 100$$

T : 元の径方向の厚さ

t : 環状支持体を外嵌し透孔に
負極集電棒を挿入した後の
径方向の厚さ

本発明において、封口体(6)としてはたとえばポリエチレン、ポリプロピレン、ナイロンなどの合成樹脂製のものが使用される。そして透孔周辺部分(6a)とその他の部分(6b)とは同材質でもよいし、また、透孔周辺部分(6a)をたとえばナイロン6、ナイロン66、ナイロン610、ナイロン11、ナイロン12などのナイロンで成形し、その他の部分(6b)をポリエチレン、ポリプロピレンなどで成形してもよい。成形は射出成形、圧縮成形などの公知の成形手段によつて行なわれる。

この電池はたとえば次に示すようにしてつくられる。

透孔周辺部分(6a)とその他の部分(6b)を別々に成形する。成形は射出成形によつて行なわれ、

01

16.7%である。

これとは別に、正極缶(4)に正極(1)を充填したのち、正極缶(4)の開口端近傍に溝(4a)を形成し、溝から先の部分の内面にアスファルトコンパウンドを塗布したのち、セパレータ(3)、電解液、負極(2)などを充填し、前記の封口体(6)を正極缶(4)の開口部に配置し、正極缶(4)の開口端部を内方へ締め付け彎曲させてその内周面を封口体(6)の外周縁部(62)に圧接して正極缶(4)の開口部を封口する。

つぎに、前記のように彎曲させた正極缶(4)の開口端部上に紙リング00を配置し、板ばね(9)、負極端子板(8)を配置し、正極側に正極端子板02を配置したのち、熱収縮性の塩化ビニル樹脂チューブ(1)で覆い、加熱して該樹脂チューブ(1)を収縮させ、ついで樹脂リング04、09を配置したのち金属外装缶03で外装する。この電池におけるガスを外部へ逃散させるための設定圧力は80 kg/cm²である。

つぎの第1表は第1図に示すような構成からなる本発明の電池Aおよび従来電池Bの電池内の圧力とガスが外部に逃散する電池個数との関係を調

03

使用樹脂は透孔周辺部分(6a)はナイロン11、その他の部分(6b)はナイロン66である。透孔周辺部分(6a)の内径すなわち透孔(64)の直径は2.0 mm、高さは4.0 mmで、上端部外径は4.0 mm、下端部外径は3.0 mmでテーパは7°であり、その他の部分(6b)の外径すなわち外周縁部(62)の外径は80.7 mmである。板ばねの厚さは0.15 mmで、ビッカース硬度は800である。そして透孔周辺部分(6a)の外周面にアスファルトコンパウンドを塗布したのち、該透孔周辺部分(6a)をその他の部分(6b)に挿入する。

上記のようにして構成された封口体(6)の厚肉環状部(61)の外側に環状支持体(7)を嵌め、透孔(64)にアスファルトコンパウンドをその軸部上部に塗布した負極集電棒(5)を挿入して、厚肉環状部(61)を負極集電棒(5)と環状支持体(7)の間で締め付ける。厚肉環状部(61)の環状支持体(7)との当接面における外径は5.0 mmで、環状支持体(7)の内径は5.1 mm、径方向の厚さは1.25 mmである。負極集電棒(5)の軸部の外径は2.6 mmで、厚肉環状部(61)の圧縮率は

02

べた結果を示すものである。電池はいずれもJISC 8511のLR 20形(直径84.2 mm 高さ59.5 mm)の筒形アルカリ・マンガン電池で、供試個数は電池A、Bとも100個ずつであり、試験は各電池に1,000 mAで充電して強制的にガスを発生させ、所定圧まで内圧を上昇させたときにガスの外部逃散が生じた電池個数を調べることによつて行なわれた。なお従来電池Bは第6図に示すような構成からなり、封口体(6)はナイロン11製で厚肉部(63b)の設計厚は0.15 mmであつてガスを外部へ逃散させるための設定圧力は80 kg/cm²で、環状支持体(7)にはガス抜き用の孔(7a)が設けられている。

第 1 表

	電池内の圧力 (kg/cm ²)				
	20~25	25~80	80~85	85~40	40~45
電池A	0	28	68	4	0
電池B	8	25	41	28	8

(注) 第1表中の電池内の圧力20~25は20 kg/cm²以上25 kg/cm²未満を、25~80は25 kg/cm²

$/\text{cm}^2$ 以上 $80 \text{ kg}/\text{cm}^2$ 未満を、 $80 \sim 85$ は $80 \text{ kg}/\text{cm}^2$ 以上 $85 \text{ kg}/\text{cm}^2$ 未満を、 $85 \sim 40$ は $85 \text{ kg}/\text{cm}^2$ 以上 $40 \text{ kg}/\text{cm}^2$ 未満を、 $40 \sim 45$ は $40 \text{ kg}/\text{cm}^2$ 以上 $45 \text{ kg}/\text{cm}^2$ 以下を示す。

第1表に示すように、従来電池Bではガスが外部へ逃散する圧力がかなりバラツキているが、本発明の電池Aの場合はそのようなバラツキが少ない。

つぎに前記と同様の本発明の電池Aおよび従来電池Bを 60°C 、相対湿度90%の雰囲気中に40日間貯蔵してその耐漏液性を調べたところ、両電池とも漏液の発生がなく、本発明の電池Aは従来電池Bと同程度の耐漏液性を有していた。このように、封口体(6)の透孔周辺部分(6a)とその他の部分(6b)とを別々に成形したことによる耐漏液性の低下は認められず、本発明の電池Aはこの種の電池においてはすぐれた耐漏液性を有しているといえる。なお電池Bの厚肉環状部(61)の圧縮率は電池Aと同様に18.7%である。

第4～5図は本発明の筒形アルカリ電池の他の

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その周囲に形成された厚肉環状部(61)と、正極缶(4)の開口端部と接する外周縁部(62)と、該厚肉環状部(61)と外周縁部(62)とを連結する連結部(68)からなり、該厚肉環状部(61)の外側には鉄製の環状支持体(7)が嵌め込まれ、透孔(64)には真鍮製の負極集電棒(5)が挿入され、厚肉環状部(61)は負極集電棒(5)と環状支持体(7)との間で圧縮されている。封口体(6)の厚肉環状部(61)における透孔周辺部分(6a)と、その他の部分(6b)すなわち厚肉環状部(61)の透孔周辺部分(6a)以外の部分、連結部(68)および外周縁部(62)からなる部分(6b)とは別々に成形され、該透孔周辺部分(6a)の外周側でその他の部分の内周面に接する面(6c)は発電要素側に向つて漸次径が縮小するテーパ状に形成され、その他の部分(6b)の内周面(6d)は前記透孔周辺部分(6a)の外周側接面(6c)に対応して発電要素側に向つて漸次径が縮小するテーパ状に形成されている。なおこれら透孔周辺部分(6a)とその他の部分(6b)とは前記の場合と同様に別々に成形され、使用に際し、透孔周辺部分(6a)をその他

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実施例を示すもので、第4図に示す電池はその環状支持体(7)が平板状で、かつその外周部が封口体(6)の外周縁部(62)まで達していないものであることを除いては、前記第1図に示す電池とほぼ同様の構成からなるものである。また第5図に示す電池は、封口体(6)の透孔周辺部分(6a)の上端部が鉤状になつていて、該鉤状部の外周面がその他の部分(6b)の内周面には接触せず、その他の部分(6b)の外周面のところまで広がっており、それに応じてその他の部分(6b)の高さが若干低くなっている点を除いては第1図に示す電池とほぼ同様の構成よりなるものであり、これら第4図および第5図に示す電池は前記第1図に示す電池と同様の効果を発揮するものである。

第8図は本発明の筒形アルカリ電池のさらに他の実施例を示す半断面図であり、第9図は第8図に示す電池の要部拡大断面図である。

まず、この電池における封口体(6)について説明すると、前記第1図に示す場合と同様に封口体(6)は負極集電棒(5)を挿入する透孔(64)を中心とし、

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の部分(6b)に挿入して封口体(6)が構成される。

第8図は上記のごとき封口体(6)を使用した筒形アルカリ電池を示すものであるが、この電池がこれまでの実施例で述べてきた電池と特に異なる点は、この電池では正極缶(4)の封口が正極缶(4)の開口端部を内方側へカールして封口体(6)の外周縁部(62)で断面逆三角形の垂下部(68c)の外周側に食い込ませることによつて行なわれていることと、封口体(6)の外周縁部(62)が金属外装缶(3)の負極側端部の折り曲げにより押えられていることである。しかしながら、この第8～9図で示す電池は、上記のような相違を有するものの、これまでの実施例で述べてきた電池と同様に、電池内の圧力が設定圧力に達すると封口体(6)の透孔周辺部分(6a)とその他の部分(6b)とが離間して内部のガスを速やかに外部へ逃散させ電池破裂を防止するとともに、ガスが電池外部へ逃散して内圧が下がったときには板ばね(9)の復元力により元の状態に復帰するという効果を奏する。

上記電池はたとえば次に示すようにしてつくら

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れる。

透孔周辺部分(6a)とその他の部分(6b)を別々に成形する。成形は射出成形によつて行なわれ、使用樹脂は透孔周辺部分(6a)はナイロン11、その他の部分(6b)はポリエチレンである。透孔周辺部分(6a)の内径すなわち透孔(64)の直径は2.0mm、高さは4.0mmで、上端部外径は4.0mm、下端部外径は8.0mmでテーパは7°であり、その他の部分(6b)の外径すなわち外周縁部(62)の外径は80.7mmである。板ばねの厚さは0.15mmで、ビッカース硬度は800である。そして透孔周辺部分(6a)の外周面にアスファルトコンパウンドを塗布したのち、該透孔周辺部分(6a)をその他の部分(6b)に挿入する。

上記のようにして構成された封口体(6)の厚肉環状部(6a)の外側に環状支持体(7)を嵌め、透孔(64)にアスファルトコンパウンドをその軸部上部に塗布した負極集電棒(5)を挿入して、厚肉環状部(61)を負極集電棒(5)と環状支持体(7)の間で締め付ける。厚肉環状部(61)の環状支持体(7)との当接面におけ

(4)

部および封口体(6)の外周縁部(62)を押えて固定し、それらの電池外部側への移動を防止できるようにする。なお、この電池におけるガスを外部へ逃散させるための設定圧力は25kg/cm²である。

つぎの第2表は第8図に示すような構成からなる本発明の電池Cおよび従来電池Dの電池内の圧力とガスが外部に逃散する電池個数との関係を調べた結果を示すものである。電池はいずれもLR20形の筒形アルカリ・マンガン電池で、供試個数は電池C、Dとも100個ずつであり、試験条件は前記第1表の場合と同様である。なお従来電池Dは第10図に示すような構成からなり、封口体(6)はポリエチレン製で薄肉部(62b)の設計厚は0.20mmであつてガスを外部へ逃散させるための設定圧力は25kg/cm²である。

第 2 表

	電池内の圧力 (kg/cm ²)				
	10~15	15~20	20~25	25~30	30~35
電池C	0	5	72	23	0
電池D	4	22	58	18	8

(2)

る外径は5.0mmで、環状支持体(7)の内径は5.1mm、径方向の厚さは1.25mmである。負極集電棒(5)の軸部の外径は2.6mmで、厚肉環状部(61)の圧縮率は16.7%である。

これとは別に、正極缶(4)に正極(1)を充填したのち、正極缶(4)の開口端部を内方へカールし、その外周面にアスファルトコンパウンドを塗布したのち、セパレータ(3)、電解液、負極(2)などを充填し、前記の封口体(6)を正極缶(4)の開口部に配置し、正極缶(4)の開口端を封口体(6)の外周縁部(62)で断面逆三角形の垂下部(68c)の外周側に食い込ませて正極缶(4)の開口部を封口する。

つぎに、封口体(6)の外周縁部(62)の上部に板ばね(9)、負極端子板(8)を配置し、正極側に正極端子板(4)を配置したのち、熱収縮性の塩化ビニル樹脂チューブ(11)で覆い、加熱して該樹脂チューブ(11)を収縮させ、ついで樹脂リング(14)、(15)を配置したのち金属外装缶(13)で外装し、金属外装缶(13)の負極側端部の折曲部により樹脂リング(14)、樹脂チューブ(11)の端部、負極端子板(8)の周縁部、板ばね(9)の端

(2)

(注) 第2表中の電池内の圧力10~15は10kg/cm²以上15kg/cm²未満を、15~20は15kg/cm²以上20kg/cm²未満を、20~25は20kg/cm²以上25kg/cm²未満を、25~30は25kg/cm²以上30kg/cm²未満を、30~35は30kg/cm²以上35kg/cm²以下を示す。

第2表に示すように、従来電池Dではガスが外部へ逃散する圧力がバラツキているが、本発明の電池Cの場合はそのようなバラツキが少ない。

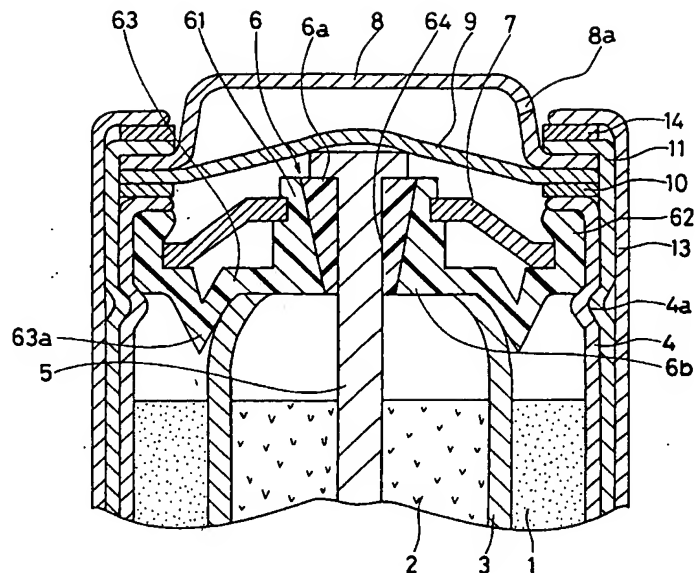
つぎに上記本発明の電池Cと従来電池Dの耐漏液性を前記と同様の条件下で調べたが両電池とも漏液の発生がなく、本発明の電池Cはこの種の電池においてはすぐれた耐漏液性を有していることが明らかにされた。なお電池Dの厚肉環状部(61)の圧縮率は電池Cと同様に16.7%である。

なお実施例では、ばねとして板ばねを用いたが、それに限定されることなくたとえばコイルスプリングなど他の形式のばねを用いることができるし、また板ばねも実施例に記載のもののみに限られることなく他の形式の板ばねを用いることができる。

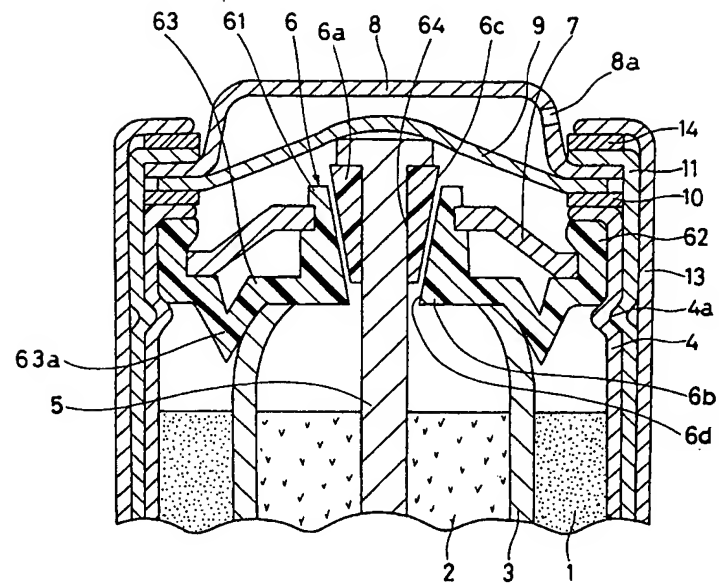
(2)

(4) …正極缶、(5) …負極集電棒、(6) …封口体、
(6a) …透孔周辺部分、(6b) …その他の部分、
(6c) …透孔周辺部分の外周側でその他の部分の
内周面と接する面、(6d) …その他の部分の内周面、

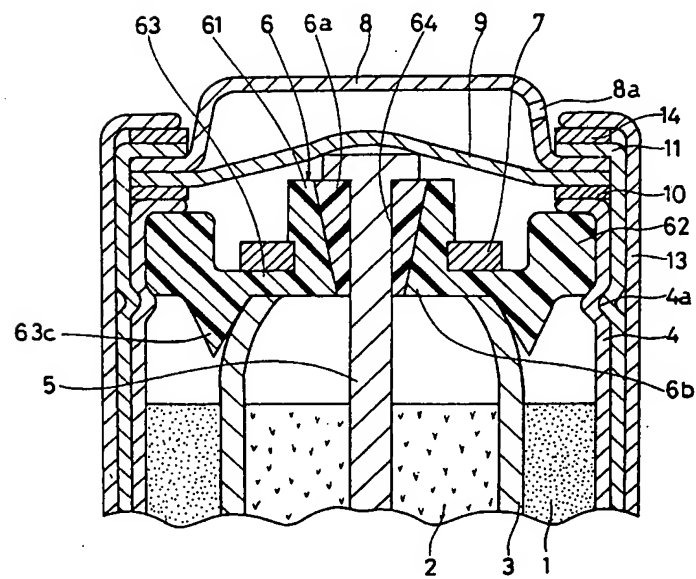
代理人 弁理士 三 輪 鐵 雄



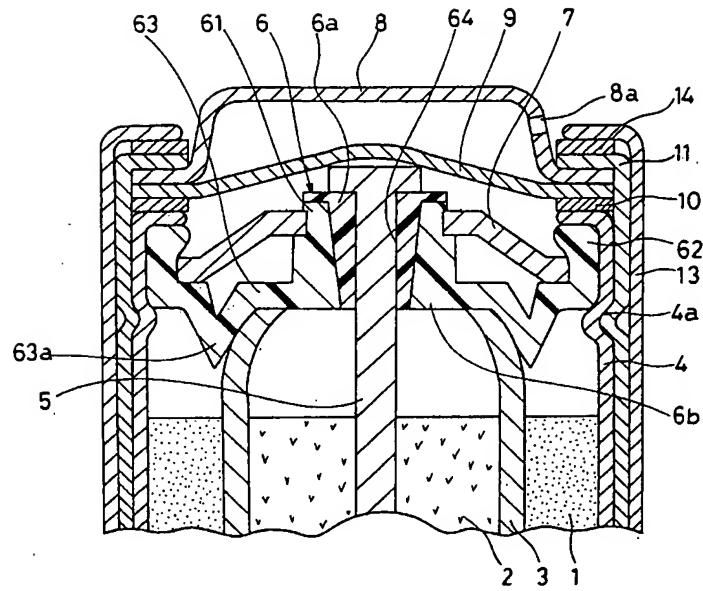
第 3 图



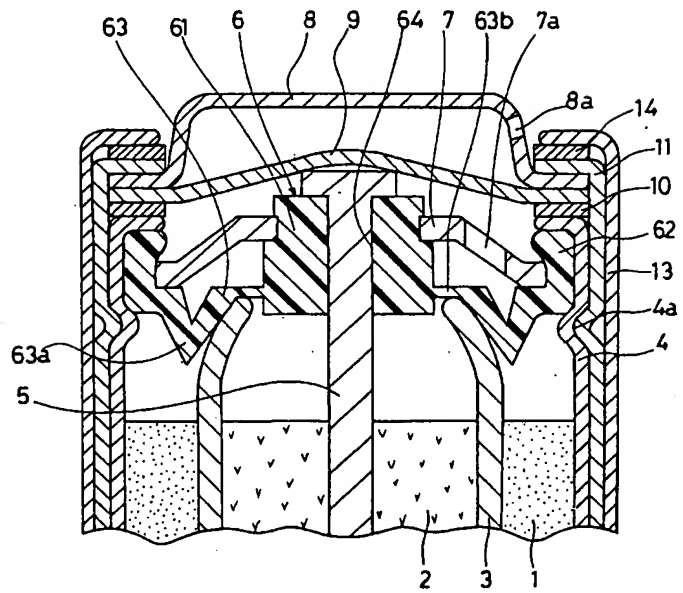
第 4 题



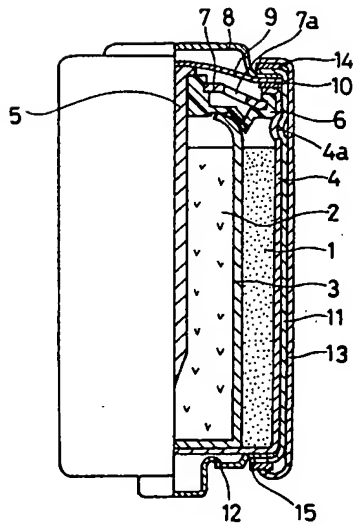
第 5 図



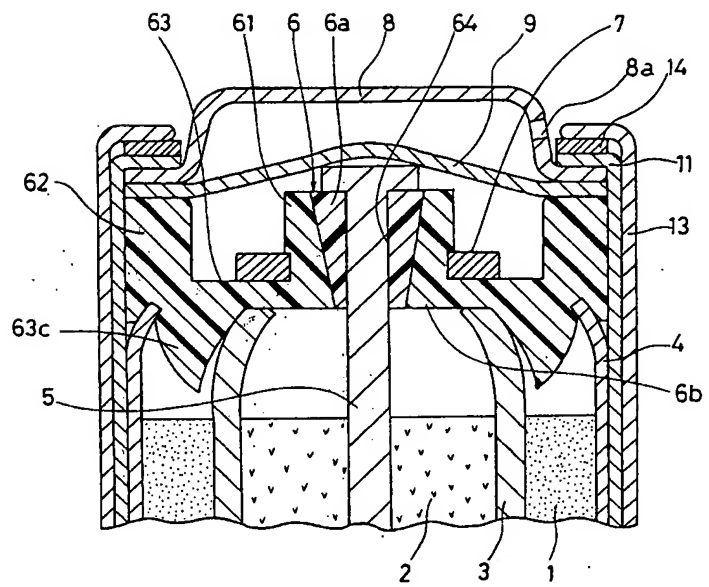
第 7 図



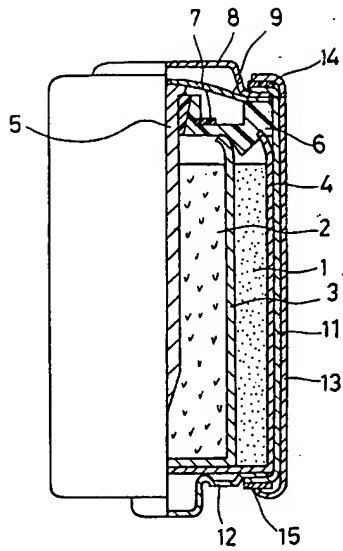
第 6 図



第 9 図



第 8 図



第 10 図

